

Historic Preservation in Michigan



Support the Fort, Western Michigan University, the City of Niles, and the Fort St. Joseph Museum

The partnership named above has collaborated in an ongoing project to locate, investigate, and interpret the site of historic Fort St. Joseph. Built in 1691 by the French near present-day Niles, the fort was an important outpost in the Great Lakes fur trade and in the struggle for power between France and Britain. In 1998 Support the Fort entered into a partnership with Western Michigan University (WMU) to locate, investigate, and interpret the fort site. The fort was located on property now owned by the city of Niles, which has encouraged and supported the search to locate the site. In particular, the city's Fort St. Joseph Museum has played a major role in promoting and assisting the project. Archaeologists from WMU, led by Dr. Michael Nassaney and Dr. William Cremin, found the elusive fort site and have begun a program of archaeological research designed to gather information about the fort and the people who lived there. Eventually the archaeological investigations will provide a foundation for interpretation of the site.